

Staff recognized at reception

THOMAS M. KENNEDY
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

On Monday, November 5 twenty-three educators from the district were recognized for their recent attainment of professional status with the Shrewsbury Public Schools. Professional status is awarded to teachers who have demonstrated excellence to the Shrewsbury Public Schools through their work and commitment to students. A teacher is eligible to receive professional status after three full years of work in the district during which time the individual is thoroughly evaluated, on an annual basis, in all facets of their performance.

While professional status is awarded in all public schools in Massachusetts, the Shrewsbury Public Schools is among a small group of districts in the state that recognize this important achievement through a formal reception. For the second consecutive year the event was held at The Sumner House, an historical house in the center of town, next to the Town Common. Currently the Sumner House serves as a bed & breakfast facility. In addition, they make their meeting rooms available for business functions such as the Professional Status Reception.

A special "thank you" is extended to the district's PTO groups and the Shrewsbury Education Association, who join the school department as co-sponsors of the event. Each person receiving professional status was individually recognized and received a small gift to remember the occasion. The reception was well attended as over sixty

people, including building principals, assistant principals, department directors, central office administrators, the entire school committee, and PTO representatives from the schools joined the honorees and their personal guests. The event included a formal recognition program along with an opportunity for the attendees to enjoy the company of one another and sample a variety of delicious hors d'oeuvres.

The staff recognized this year along with their teaching area: High School: John Binkoski-Latin, Gracelyn Matson-Guidance Counselor, Bonnie Narcisi-Music Director, Janice O'Meara-Science, Jean-Marie Sullivan-Mathematics Director, Jennifer Wolff-Social Studies. Middle School: Kevin Donahue-Language Arts/Social

Studies, Heather Gablaski-Language Arts/Social Studies, Stephen Murray-Music, Joanne Rose-Math, Janalee Welch-Language Arts/Social Studies, Scott Yonker-Math/Social Studies. Coolidge School: Jennifer Lotane-Grade 3. Floral Street School: Kristine Atherton-Music, Carol Bradley-Grade 4, Lisa Hurter-Special Education, Andrea Reagan-Music, Arlene Solan-Title One. Parker Road Pre-School: Deborah Quinn-Speech. Paton School: Aimee Federico-Grade One. Spring Street School: Bridget Connole-West-Grade Three, Cynthia DiPinto-Grade One. In addition, the district recognized Dr. B. J. Lates-Principal Spring Street School, for her extraordinary commitment to the district as she completed three years of service.



PHOTO BY BOB STEARNS

Front row left to right: Jennifer Wolff-teacher, Gracelyn Matson-High School Guidance and son Evan, Mark Murray-School Committee member. Back row: Mr. DiPinto, Cindy DiPinto.

Differentiated instruction-meeting the needs of all the students

MICHAEL F. BRANDMEYER
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Schools, classrooms and expectations for what student know and understand have changed a great deal in the last twenty years. Expectations for all students to achieve at high academic levels described by state or national curriculum frameworks and the challenge to teachers to meet the individual needs of every child continues the change the ways teachers teach and classrooms operate.

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Shrewsbury Public Schools maintains a philosophy of striving to challenge all learners through the general curriculum in the regular classroom. This requires teachers to use various methods of instruction and assessment to address the instructional needs of all students, from the least able learner to the most able.

The professional development program for 2001-2002 has been designed to help teachers develop the skills and strategies to be successful teachers in this environment. Last fall the Professional Development Committee surveyed the faculty seeking to identify teachers' 'areas of interest' as well as areas in which they felt they might improve their teaching skills. The results of the survey pointed to the teachers' need for strategies to challenge all students in the regular classroom. As a result the district

has adopted the theme of differentiating instruction for the professional development program for the 2001-2002 school year.

To prepare for the upcoming professional development days, nearly fifty teachers participated in Summer Institutes or developed workshops designed to address teachers' needs. These teacher-leaders will facilitate on-going workshops on each of the professional development days this year. Two teams of teachers completed graduate level course work in preparation for this program.

A team of teachers participated at the Confratute at the University of Connecticut, under the direction of Joseph Renzuli, where they studied issues related to educating gifted and talented and high achieving students. Their work will help the team address issues teacher face when instructing very capable students in their classrooms.

At the same time, thirty-one teachers completed a graduate level course on differentiating instruction. The instruction began in July and will conclude in the early fall. Working with Peg Mongillo, an instructor from *Teachers21, Inc.* teachers and administrators studied the unique learning needs of all students and learned about effective instructional strategies to provide the opportunity to all children to achieve at high academic levels. Some of the key points included the importance of connecting instruction and assessment, being clear about what really matters in each

content area, considering individual student's strengths, and challenging all students with respectful work.

Most important is the understanding that: "Even though students may learn in many ways, the essential skills and content they learn remain steady. That is, students can take different roads to the same destination." (*Carol Ann Tomlinson, 1999*)

It is the hope of the professional development committee that by providing various opportunities to all teachers, they too will learn the essential skills necessary to meet the unique learning needs of their students and that teachers also may take different roads that lead to the same destination - engaging classrooms that respect each child and provide enriched learning opportunities for all students.

This summer many teachers worked hard to prepare to facilitate high quality workshops during the school year. As the year begins teachers have also worked hard to learn more about differentiating their instruction.

The Professional Development Committee is looking forward to a successful series of workshops on professional days, which when combined with the broad spectrum of professional opportunities offered by the district will help the teachers in Shrewsbury to remain the outstanding faculty that they have always been. This is an important initiative for our schools and we are ready to make the important long term commitment necessary to ensure success.

Shrewsbury Child Development Committee

MELANIE PETRUCCI
SEDC MEMBER

Storytime age children enjoy stories, poems, songs and crafts. Choose either a Wednesday or Thursday session. There are four weeks in a session. Fee is \$10 per child and \$5 for siblings, lap babies are welcome. Sign-up and program takes place at Mount Olivet Church.

Sign-up	Session begins	Session ends
January 9	January 16 & 17	February 6 & 7
March 13	March 20 & 21	April 10 & 11
April 24	May 1 & 2	May 22 & 23

Sign is at 10:30 am-11:00 Program is 9:30-10:30 am

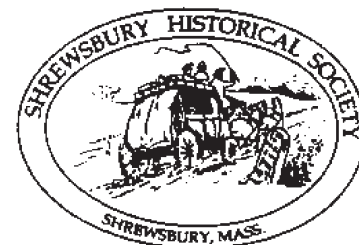
Playground linkup coffees

This is a great opportunity to meet other moms, make new friends and possibly form an ongoing playgroup with children of similar ages to your own. These coffees are held 9:30-11:30 am at various locations. Call 508-845-0121 to reserve your place for February 7, April 4 and May 21.

Upcoming Special Activities

Pajama Movie Night-Friday, January 25 6:30-7:30 pm. Free. Come in your favorite P.J.'s and bring your lovey and blanket to enjoy a movie and light snack.

Valentine Social-Friday, February 8, 9:30-11:30 am at the First Congregational Church. Come and socialize with refreshments, make and take craft, and entertainment. What better way to beat the winter blahs?



Shrewsbury Historical Society

The Shrewsbury Historical Society museum was opened in September 2001. It is located on the common in the 1930 Brick School House.

On display in the museum is a varied collection of artifacts tied to the history of Shrewsbury over the last 275 years.

There are documents, old firearms, textiles, and handiwork spanning several generations of Shrewsbury residents. Town industry and medical history are also represented in the collection.

On display in the downstairs of the building are pictures of places around town dating from the 1800's.

Tour groups and classes of all ages are welcome. For information about museum hours phone 508-842-5239. To schedule a group visit or find out about the next Shrewsbury Historical Society meeting call Keith Harlow, 508-845-7111.